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## NOTES

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### I. MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT

**New York.**—*The City Record.*—The Department of Public Charities in the city of New York has adopted a laudable plan in its quarterly public statement. The contents of this report belong more properly to another department of THE ANNALS, but its importance from the general municipal point of view deserves mention here as showing the possibilities of a well-written official report when addressed to taxpayers and the general public instead of library shelves.

Commissioner Folks begins his statement by saying that it includes only such reports as are of general interest, and excludes the voluminous matter hitherto included in the quarterly reports of the department, dealing in detail with minor repairs made and other work done at each of the various institutions. A page of editorial matter follows, setting forth various administrative changes. Five pages of tabular statistics show the method of book-keeping in the department, and contain many suggestions, not only for treasurers and auditors of city accounts, but also for the superintendents of eleemosynary institutions. For instance, no official can fail to profit from a glance over the statistics of the municipal lodging house, where lodgers are classified not only according to sex but with reference to nativity; age (under 2, 2 to 16, 16 to 21, 21 to 50, 50 to 70, 70 and over); time in city (under 60 days, 60 days to 6 months, 6 months to 1 year, 1 year to 5 years, 5 years and over); natives; references (number and kind); medical attendance; disposition (sent to work, sent to Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Children, sent to lodging house).

Probably in no page of the city's documents are reflected greater insight, technical knowledge and business ability than in Commissioner Folks' editorial page. One marvels that a new incumbent should have been able to accomplish so much in three months. Only one familiar with the problems involved could have done this. Of special interest here are the indications of improvements in bookkeeping, by which responsibility is more immediately and conclusively located. For instance, by merely requiring certain reports, the commissioner has practically stopped transfers of patients from one hospital to another, when disease or accident makes such transfers hazardous. Likewise, the property of inmates is being properly accounted for. Specifications for contracts are arranged to afford full opportunity for bidders, being made more specific and a copy of each being sent to the heads of all institutions, who are instructed to report forthwith any supplies not conforming to the requirements of the specification.

The officers in the Department of Public Charities have by legislation been enabled to secure the adoption of a school teachers' retirement fund. All servants and domestics heretofore carried on the payroll of the department and assigned to duty in officers' families have been dropped from the

payroll, and the officers have been forbidden to assign such duties to any person receiving compensation from the city. It has been found possible to transfer some twelve hundred persons a year directly to Blackwell's Island without going first to Flatbush at considerable expense to the city and discomfort to the patients. A little study of statistics having shown that foundlings boarded in families die at the rate of only 14 per cent instead of 100 per cent, as in institutions, the commissioner has adopted the plan of giving to orphans and dependent children the advantages of family care. Incidentally it has been found possible at the city hospital to decrease the number of employees by ninety-five. At the same time, the number of patients has increased by eighty-nine. This interesting report for the quarter ending March 31, 1902, dated May 24, 1902, is to be found in Volume XXX, 8832.

**Cincinnati.**<sup>1</sup>—For the first time since 1851, the year in which the present constitution of Ohio was adopted, the legislature has yielded to the constitutional provision against special legislation. Heretofore special laws enabling municipalities to issue bonds for specific purposes have been passed, and these have been upheld by the Supreme Court, but within the last six years the court has been divided on the question, and during the past year the majority of the court has finally declared such special legislation unconstitutional. The new law provides that all legislative bodies of municipalities, townships and counties, two-thirds of the members concurring, shall have power to issue bonds for all authorized purposes to an amount not to exceed 1 per cent of the total duplicate in any fiscal year. Should the amount asked for exceed that amount, it must be submitted to a vote of the people in that political division. The total amount so issued shall never exceed 4 per cent of the total duplicate unless a referendum is had.

Important changes were made in the state tax laws, which in time will raise a revenue sufficient to do away with the present indirect state levy. Hereafter all domestic and foreign corporations organized for profit must file annual reports with the Secretary of State, setting forth the amount of authorized capital stock, par value of each share, amount subscribed, amount issued and outstanding, and amount paid up. Domestic corporations must pay annually a fee of one-tenth of 1 per cent upon the subscribed or issued and outstanding capital stock of said corporation, and to be not less than \$10 in each case. Foreign corporations, in addition to corporation fees, must pay annually a fee of one-tenth of 1 per cent upon the proportion of the authorized capital stock of the corporation represented by property owned and used and business transacted in Ohio, in no case less than \$10. Corporations not organized for profit must pay annual fees of \$10 if they are mutual insurance companies or mutual benevolent companies, and \$1 if they are religious and charitable organizations. So much for the fiscal acts of the legislature.

Unfortunately its political acts were not so beneficial. The Garfield Corrupt Practice Act was repealed, and hereafter the candidate for office will be unhampered in his campaign expenditures.

The friends of good government made another gallant but unsuccessful

<sup>1</sup> Contributed by Max B. May, Esq.

fight for a municipal code, including civil-service provisions. The adherents of the measure gained some strength, and if the interest in the movement is kept up it may ultimately succeed.

The electors of the State of Ohio will have an opportunity of voting this fall for a constitutional amendment granting to the Governor the veto power. Ohio is one of the four states of the Union (North Carolina, Delaware and Rhode Island being the other three), whose governors have no veto power. This denial of the right of veto was originally due to the hostility to Governor St. Clair, the first governor of the old Northwest Territory.

The legislature also authorized municipalities to sprinkle streets at the expense of property holders, provided a sufficient number of residents of a given district petitioned council to do so. All the city levies must hereafter be approved by the board of supervisors, thus insuring a uniform system of levy.

Andrew Carnegie has given the city \$180,000 for six branch public libraries, on condition that the city furnish the sites. The legislature has accordingly authorized the expenditure of \$180,000 for such sites.

The Supreme Court of Ohio recently upheld the validity of the extension of the lease of the Cincinnati Southern Road, and, in accordance with the terms of the law, the Sinking Fund trustees have begun to refund the outstanding bonds of the city, some of which mature on July 1, 1902. Eight million dollars of these bonds, the interest rate of which heretofore has been 7 3-10 per cent, will be refunded by a 3 1-2 per cent bond. The premium on these bonds was 103.81, which will reduce the interest rate from 3 1-2 to 3.295.<sup>2</sup>

**Minneapolis.**<sup>3</sup>—*Police Scandal.* In the ANNALS for May, 1901,<sup>4</sup> attention was called to a particularly flagrant example of the application of the spoils system, whereby one-half of the police force of Minneapolis was dismissed in order to provide places for the supporters of the incoming mayor. This move has already produced a result which might have been anticipated, in the worst municipal scandal that has ever marked the history of the city, and one that has had but few parallels in the annals of police corruption elsewhere.

Early in May it became known that the grand jury was investigating the allegations of police corruption that had been prevalent from almost the

<sup>2</sup> Since the writing of the above communication, the Supreme Court of Ohio has delivered four additional important opinions involving constitutional questions, and in each case the classification of cities by classes and grades has been declared unconstitutional. The present municipal government of Cleveland has been declared unconstitutional. The condition of affairs has become so serious that Governor Nash has called a special session of the Ohio Legislature to meet at Columbus, August 25, 1902. At this session it is more than likely that a municipal code applying uniformly to all cities and villages will be adopted. The contest will be between a "federal system" of city government; *i. e.*, heads of departments appointed by the mayor, and the "board plan;" *i. e.*, administrative officers elected by the people. There is little or no probability of the merit system being adopted as an integral part of the new code.

<sup>3</sup> Contributed by Prof. Frank Maloy Anderson, University of Minnesota.

<sup>4</sup> P. 139

beginning of the administration. It was some time, however, before the public became convinced that important results would be obtained, and only within a few days has the full extent of the corruption become apparent. Up to the present writing five members of the police force have been dealt with by the courts; one, the chief of police, was acquitted, to the great surprise of the public, the case against him being apparently very strong; three others were tried, convicted and sentenced to imprisonment for terms ranging from ninety days to six years; a fifth pleaded guilty and is awaiting sentence. Several others, including the mayor and the chief of police (under a second indictment) are also awaiting trial; two more are fugitives from justice.

Several different charges have been brought against the culprits, the most common being the acceptance of bribes from "big mitt" gamblers and keepers of houses of prostitution. The trials disclosed the existence of a regular system whereby the police not only permitted but assisted "big mitt" men to fleece their victims. One captain of police was convicted of extorting money for an appointment to the police force. It seems quite probable that several more convictions will be obtained, but however that may be, the investigation has already produced enough benefit to warrant its inception. The public has been aroused as never before upon a municipal matter. Doubtless no thoroughgoing reformation of the police force will be possible until the expiration of the present mayor's term of office in January, but already much has been done in response to the demands of public opinion. It is a safe prediction that Minneapolis will not soon have to fight again the grosser forms of police corruption.

*Primary Election: Separate Election.* At the beginning of the investigation little attention was paid to the matter outside of Minneapolis; as the extent of the corruption was brought to light interest in the affair became quite general. Owing to this tardy attention two widespread impressions in regard to the matter have become prevalent; first, that the corruption extends to all or nearly all the branches of the city government; second, that the scandal is a result of the primary election system put into operation for the first time at the last election. The first of these is totally erroneous. Under the charter the mayor has complete control over the police department and but little other power. In consequence the corruption has been confined to the police force. The second impression is partly correct, but principally wrong. It is probably true that no convention would have given a party nomination to the present mayor, and his election was, therefore, due in part to the primary election system. But, on the other hand, under ordinary circumstances he would have been beaten at the polls. A most peculiar combination of circumstances enabled him to carry the election. The present scandal constitutes an argument for separate municipal elections rather than an argument against the primary election system.

**Orange, N. J.—Civics Club.**<sup>5</sup> A season of considerable activity and interest was closed by the members of the Civics Club of Orange, N. J., with their annual dinner on the evening of May 14. Thomas M. Osborne, of

<sup>5</sup> Contributed by M. De Lisle Zimmerman.

Auburn, N. Y., president of the board of trustees of the George Junior Republic, delivered an address on "Civics and Reformatory Movements;" Clinton Rogers Woodruff, of Philadelphia, spoke on "Civics and the Work of Organization in State and Nation," and the Rev. Charles H. Mann, editor of the *New Church Messenger* and member of the Orange Board of Education, on "Civics in Relation to the Education of the Citizen."

The civic movement in the Oranges is conducted by three organizations, the Citizens' Committee, which is devoted to excise questions and aids the boards of excise; the Civics Sanitation Committee, which gives its attention to health matters, supplementing the work of the boards of health; and the Civics Club, which studies the questions of municipal government and, by public discussion, endeavors to enlighten the mayors and common councils as to public views on civic questions, and to give their support to beneficial legislation.

Two important objects were accomplished by the club during the past season, the organization of a State Federation of Civic Clubs, or rather associations formed to promote civic improvement, and the starting of a movement to obtain public playgrounds for the children in the Oranges. Fourteen associations from different parts of the state have joined the Federation.<sup>6</sup> Although it is but two months since the club took up the question of public playgrounds for Orange children, the movement is so far advanced that in a few weeks the grounds will be provided. As soon as the club decided to take action in the matter, a committee was appointed to confer with similar committees from other charitable and humane societies in the Oranges. A conference was held, an organization effected, and plans adopted. The Essex County Park Commission, the boards of education and the common councils may be counted upon to assist the movement, while private citizens have offered to aid by the use of their vacant land and by money contributions.

Early in the season, with the view of getting expert opinion on the tax question, the club sent a copy of the Tax Reform Association's platform to every assessor in the state, asking if the changes in legislation, local option in taxation, etc., which the association advocated, would be beneficial. A number of replies were received, a large majority in favor of the platform, while those who did not favor it stated that the tax laws need revision. No action was taken in the matter by the club, although the tax question presented itself in a number of different forms during the season. It is impossible to state how largely the club discussions of such questions as the need of an isolation hospital, the granting of the water and electric contracts, trolley franchises, sidewalks, street signs, scavenger service, etc., have influenced the action of the common councils, but on several occasions the club members have been gratified to see their ideas carried out, although they have not made any direct recommendation in the matter. They feel that one of the most effective ways of influencing legislation in the common councils is by promoting discussion of the views of taxpayers and public officials.

<sup>6</sup>See ANNALS, May, 1902, p. 165

**National Municipal League.**—We take pleasure in calling the attention of our readers to the seventh annual report of the National Municipal League, which, while purporting to be the proceedings of the seventh conference, held at Boston, May 7 to 9, 1902, contains, as do its predecessors, a great amount of material in the way of special and elaborate reports. Since the volume has not yet passed the proof stage, we leave until later a detailed review. We wish here to mention two features of the report which may be of immediate interest and assistance.

**Municipal Program.**—The secretary of the league calls attention to the influence of the Municipal Program.<sup>7</sup> The Mayors' Association of Connecticut declared in January for city charters "uniform in character," and calculated to leave as many of the details as possible "to the local officers of the community to be governed." Of the new St. Paul charter a local organ said: "It is the best charter ever constructed in America. . . . It has been framed as nearly as possible in accordance with the principles and recommendations of the National Municipal League. . . . The Commission had before it, and made use of, the books published by the league, and it was found that the wisdom and experience of the members of the league were of great help and advantage." The new Alabama constitution likewise reflects the Municipal Program in several important respects, as does that of Virginia.

The secretary calls attention to the fact that "practically every Charter Commission has in some wise used the proceedings of the National Municipal League and its Municipal Program. One Commission provided each member with a copy of the latter volume. In Honolulu one of the papers published the Program in its entirety, to enable the Hawaiian legislature to be properly informed concerning what the paper in question was pleased to call a 'model charter.'"

**Committee on Instruction in Municipal Government.**<sup>8</sup>—The second report of the committee contains two outlines of courses designed to furnish practical suggestions for colleges that have not yet introduced special courses in municipal government, a plea for municipal art as a subject of study in school and college, and a list of eighteen available lecturers for single and course lectures together with seventy-eight subjects. Dr. Sparling, of Wisconsin, gives an outline of his valuable laboratory course, dealing with administrative methods and problems, while Professor Zueblin's contribution is a skeleton sketch of the course of lectures which he has given so successfully throughout the country, East and West. Professor Adams, formerly of Pennsylvania, suggests convincingly the strategic importance of approaching municipal problems from an æsthetic standpoint.

The committee began its work with a desire not only to ascertain what is actually being done to give our students an understanding of municipal government, but more particularly to place practical suggestions within reach of every college. The two reports have presented five complete courses carefully worked out and tested in class-room and arena. While it is true that

<sup>7</sup> See ANNALS, May 1901, pp. 35-47.

<sup>8</sup> See ANNALS, January, 1901, p. 147.

these courses have been prepared for the large universities, Pennsylvania, Cornell and Wisconsin, the outlines are so complete and so well organized that they teem with suggestions that can be successfully applied in the small college. With the references and syllabuses given by Professor Rowe, Professor Zueblin, Dr. Brooks, Dr. Sparling and Mr. Woodruff, the teacher in the small college can easily introduce into his courses in sociology, history, economics or political science three, six, twelve lectures on municipal government, or, perhaps most advantageously, a course for the second term. No one can read these two reports of the committee without being satisfied that they offer a practical way to make municipal problems of vital interest to the American student.

The report may be had upon application to the National Municipal League, Philadelphia, and is signed by President Thomas M. Drown, Lehigh University, chairman; Professor E. L. Bogart, Oberlin College; Professor John H. Finley, Princeton University; Dr. Wm. F. McDowell, secretary Methodist Board of Education; Clinton Rogers Woodruff, Philadelphia; Dr. Wm. H. Allen, secretary New Jersey State Charities Aid Association; Professor Charles Zueblin, University of Chicago; Professor Kendrick C. Babcock, University of California; Professor John L. Stewart, Lehigh University.